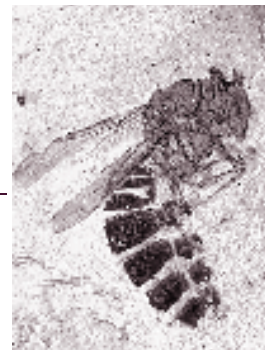


Doris Kneuer

## Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument



*Fossil wasp from the 34 million-year-old Florissant Formation. Specimen placed in collection 10 years ago. Serves as logo for Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.*

In recent years, the monument museum collections have been used in many ways—research, interpretation, training, and association sales.

Exhibits of plant and insect fossils have been designed and installed in the visitor center. These illustrate what the finely detailed fossils look like, and what they teach us about paleoenvironments.

Displays at the Hornbek Homestead, a small early ranching site, illustrate the lifestyle during the Homestead period. Many school groups are given tours of this house, and twice a year an open house is held with living history demonstrations.

Scientific Research has been conducted, both in-house and via loans. Specific requests recently have been to view water beetles (both fossil and modern), rose and other flower fossils, fish fossils, and modern butterflies. Specific institutions requesting loans were the University of Colorado, the Colorado School of Mines, the University of Chicago, and the National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian).

Archival Research has included the use of historic scientific notes, photos, and maps of Florissant Fossil Beds as a reference for current excavations. Historic plat maps and family photographs have been requested as part of a new book on the history of the Florissant area. Copies of historic photographs have been made for descendants of local families.

The collections are used annually for training summer interns and seasonal rangers in both paleontology and curatorial methods.

Replicas of one plant and one insect fossil have been made for sale in the cooperating association book shop. Post cards and bookmarks have been printed using high quality photographs of the insect and leaf fossils as well as the petrified trees.

*Doris Kneuer is a volunteer curator who has taken on full responsibility for the monument's museum collections for the last six years.*

Lisbet Collins Bailey and Erica Schoenhals Toland

## San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park preserves America's West Coast maritime heritage. Its collections include a fleet of National Historic Landmark vessels at Hyde Street Pier and the West Coast's largest library of maritime history. Over half of the items in the collection, though, are archival material, including 250,000 photographs, 120,000 vessel plans, and 1,500 linear feet of textual records.

Preparation of archival collections for use is labor-intensive, involving arrangement, preservation, and description. The park's Historic Documents Department first prepares a finding aid, which presents information about the creator and the functions that brought the records into being, provides a description of the scope and nature of the records, and creates a folder title list that outlines the physical arrangement of the materials. The finding aid is then indexed for multiple points of access, such as vessel names, vessel types, names, subjects, and document types. These index terms are then compiled into a master index.

Archival records are kept because they contain information of continuing usefulness for researchers, scholars, artists, film makers, genealogists, historians, model-makers, and legal assistants who access the collections by phone, fax, mail, and in-person.

Less obvious, but even more important than the direct use of archives, is the indirect use of the information that users take away. Researchers do more than take notes; they transform copy prints of historic photographs, large format photocopies of architectural drawings, and microfilm copies of sea journals into books, articles, exhibits, models, films, TV shows, calendars, postcards, and posters. These creative products then take on a life of their own, informing, entertaining, educating, and delighting millions of indirect users around the world.

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park's archival materials were featured in a handsome book of West Coast maritime history titled, *A Pacific Legacy*, and other photos were reproduced in a stunning portfolio of historic images titled, *San Francisco Views*. Research has resulted